

Role of USEPA

Regional Offices

in

NELAP Implementation

5 Areas of EPA Regional Participation

- 1. NELAP Recognition of State Accrediting Authorities (AAs)**
- 2. NELAP Accreditation of State Labs**
- 3. NELAP Accreditation of EPA Regional Labs**
- 4. NELAC Process**
- 5. Tech Assistance & Guidance**

Regional Role in NELAP Recognition of State AAs

- **Regions are AA Assessment Team Leads**
 - ▶ **Assemble NELAP Approved Team**
 - ▶ **Complete Technical Document
Review**
 - ▶ **Conduct On-Site Assessment &
Follow-up**
 - ▶ **Give NELAP Team Recommendation**

AAAs Recognized by NELAP on June 28, 1999

Current Status By Region

Reg. State

1 New Hampshire

2 New Jersey

2 New York

3 Pennsylvania

4 Florida

5 Illinois

Reg. State

6 Louisiana

7 Kansas

8 Colorado

8 Utah

9 California

10 Oregon

in ~6 wks

Regional Role in NELAP Accreditation of State Labs

- **NELAP Developing National NELAC Compliant Program for State Lab Accreditation**
 - ▶ **NELAP to be AA for State Lab Accreditation.**
 - ▶ **Regions to Implement Program Under the NELAP Umbrella**

- **Regions to serve as NELAP State Lab Assessment Team Leads**

- ▶ **Assemble NELAP Approved Team**
- ▶ **Conduct Application Review**
- ▶ **Complete Tech Document Review**
- ▶ **Perform On-Site Assessment & Follow-up**
- ▶ **Recommend Accreditation if NELAC Std's Met**

Proposed EPA State Lab Accreditation Program - Status & Elements

- **NELAP Recognition as Primary AA - Expected ~January, 2000**
- **Neither NELAP Nor the Regions Will Be a Secondary Accrediting Authority**
- **NELAP, with Regional Support, Will Accredite At Least One Lab per Accrediting Authority State**

- **Before NELAP is Recognized as an AA - State Labs May Go to Another AA**
 - ▶ **A State May Accredite Its Own Labs Only if the Lab & AA Programs Have Different Staff & Lines of Management**
- **After NELAP is Recognized as an AA - a State Lab or AA May Request its EPA Region to Lead the State Lab Assessment**
 - ▶ **A State Lab Applies to NELAP for Accreditation**

Regional Role in NELAP Accreditation of State Labs

- **EPA Labs Follow Same Accreditation Process as State & Private Labs**

- ▶ **Region Submits Application**
- ▶ **Team reviews Tech Documents**
- ▶ **Team does On-site Assessment & Follow-up**
- ▶ **Team Recommends Accreditation**
- ▶ **NELAP Accredits Regional Lab**

Proposed Regional Lab Accreditation Program - Status & Elements

- **NELAP to Accredite EPA Regional Labs**
- **Lab Assessment Team - Regional Peers**
- **EPA Labs Apply ~Spring, 2000**
 - ▶ **Many Plan to Be NELAP Accredited**
 - ▶ **Not Currently an EPA Requirement**

Regional Role in the NELAC Process

- **Membership on Committees**
- **Voting Members as Representatives & Delegates**
- **Reviewers of Standards, Checklists, Training Material, & Related Documents**

Tech Assistance & Guidance From Regions

- **To AAs: Obtaining & Maintaining NELAP Recognition, & Implementing NELAP**
- **To State Labs: Obtaining & Maintaining NELAP Accreditation**
- **To Regional Labs: Applying for, Obtaining, & Maintaining NELAP Recognition**
- **To Associations & Private Labs**
 - ▶ **Small Labs Have Special Concerns**

Small Lab Involvement with NELAP

- **Lab Concerns Due to Limited Personnel & Small Budgets**
 - ▶ Increased Burden for QA & QC, Including Semi-Annual PT Studies & Possible Unannounced Audits
 - ▶ Increased Documentation & Other Time Constrained Administrative Tasks

- **Possible Assistance From Federal, State, Voluntary, & Private Sectors**
 - ▶ **Federal & State Tech Assistance & Guidance**
 - ▶ **Two-Tier State Accreditation Program - Non-NELAC Option With Fewer PT Requirements**
 - ▶ **Outreach - NELAP, Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB), & State Lab Associations**

Summary

EPA Regional Participation in NELAP

- **Recognition of State Accrediting Authorities**
- **Accreditation of State Labs**
- **Accreditation of EPA Regional Labs**
- **The NELAC Process**
- **Technical Assistance & Guidance**

For More Information on NELAC:

<http://www.epa.gov/ttn/nelac/>